1: Ammar E, I-5 (1951) 1954
MR13 Feilahin MR13
Silwa

fined to their homes. A man who does not frequently mix with his fellow men outside the house is branded as the 'man of the oven', while a woman who continually leaves her house is called 'strayer'. Men meet for their spontaneous gathering and gossip outside the house, while women meet inside. While women are expected to adorn themselves with earrings, nose rings, kohl for the eyes, finger rings, anklets, henna for the palms (almost an ornament for every sense), men are supposed to refrain. Moreover while men shave or cut their hair, women leave it to grow as long as possible and never cut it.[1] While men wear pants, women do not; while women's speech is usually sprinkled with words in the diminutive, men are not expected to follow this habit; while women carry things on their heads, men never do so, and only carry things either in the hands, or on the back or shoulders. On walking along the village streets and alleyways, women keep near the wall, while men walk in the middle of the street. Although both men and women are fond of dramatizing their speech, yet they have different stylized ways of doing this. While men use their index fingers as a sign of threatening, women point out with their middle finger. Women grasp their chin or slap their face with open palms for surprise or regret or shame, while men slowly clap their hands. On being angry or hurt, the woman's cry is 'Abouh, abouh . . .' and in joy her shrill cry is 'Wri, ri, ri . . .'. Men are not supposed to utter any cries of joy or anger. In threatening a man will threaten in default to cut off his moustache, while a woman threatens to cut off her head hair. Men and women use different invectives and imprecations as well as different greetings. Women in their speech draw out their words, whereas men end them abruptly. Women do not participate either in individual or communal worship in the mosque as they are excluded altogether from it, but there is no Koranic support for this. On the other hand, they are usually the performers of magico-religious rituals connected with averting the evil eye, bringing about pregnancy, or healing the sick; and men are less engaged in this sphere. It is also interesting to note that, as in Classical Arabic, the dialect of the village attached the feminine 'n' at the end of the verb in the third person feminine plural, a feature which does not occur in most of the urban dialects in Egypt.

Between men and women there is complete avoidance in looking at each other face to face, except in the case of certain kinships specified by the Koran. On meeting men in the street, women have always to turn their heads to one side, and pull their head covering across their face, and men are expected to lower their heads and not stare at women. The sex taboo on looking and talking without reserve does not apply to children till they reach the adolescent stage, when they gradually acquire such norms and begin to observe them as a part of their value system of politeness. On the other hand, very old women and men are freed from such restric-

[1] See Appendix VIII, for a boy who said that he would be ashamed if his hair grew long, presumably because it looks like that of girls.

1: Ammar E. 1-5 (1951) 1954
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Silwa

834 tions, and an old woman can pass by a group of men without covering her face, and can salute them, or talk to them on passing, but even then she cannot sit with men outside the house.

INTER-FAMILY RELATIONS

593 It is appropriate here to discuss the stylized norms of relationship and behaviour that should obtain between the various members of the family as an index to the understanding of the social structure and its functioning.

The husband-wife pattern is one where the husband is the superior partner and enjoys the highest position in the family. He is, as the saying goes, 'the supporting pillar and the vantage of the house', who is expected to make all the important decisions. The wife should tell her husband of the major events in the household, though he should not by convention betray any eagerness in enquiring about them. The husband is socially responsible for the acts and undertakings of his wife, immediately she moves from her matrilocal residence. He usually plans the work of his sons, while the wife does the same with the daughters; but he is not expected to interfere with his wife's domestic work. On the other hand, the wife is supposed to be submissive, devoted, and respectful to her husband. Sexual fidelity is the hallmark of sustained marriage relationship, as infidelity entails at least divorce, if not attempting to kill the wife and the paramour. As a wife, she should also attend to her husband, offering the best food to him rather than to the children or herself; the reason being that she can always have children but she cannot afford to have a substitute for her supporter (sanad). She should open the door for her husband when he knocks, pour out the water when he washes his hands after the meal, and give him priority in every respect.

Although the wife seems subordinate in this pattern of relationship, she is almost the absolute manager of the house. She is the treasurer of the crops, money, legal documents, and the holder of the keys to the various chests in the house. If the man is expected to be generous and showy, the wife is expected to be frugal and industrious. The saying is that 'the man is like an overflowing sea, while the woman is like a dyke, checking his undue extravagance'. It is also conceded that the building up of a man is due to his wife, but so is his downfall, which would be regarded as the result of his wife's domestic policy.

In spite of the fact that married women do not work in the field in Silwa and in most parts of Aswan Province, the wife certainly monopolizes certain economic pursuits which are considered to be purely her domain. She raises chickens, geese, ducks, goats and sheep, and men recognize this as a purely female occupation. This is in contrast to the raising of cows, camels and donkeys by men. My informant, Mahmoud, told me: 'Women look after the "small change" while men look after the pounds.' The wife raises poultry and tends to small change as these are directly concerned

1: Ammar E, I-5 (1951) 1954
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Silwa

or from a visit, to give birth without undue pain. However, immediately the birth-pangs are felt, close female relatives are called upon, and soon the house teems with other women coming to offer their help. It should be mentioned here that while during pregnancy the husband's relatives are expected to show more interest than the wife's, the actual event of birth is one of the obligations of the matrilineal side. It is natural that in the case of the first-born child the event of birth is attended to by the mother and her relatives, as the woman is still in her matrilocal residence. If she has left it for any reason, she usually moves back to her mother's home to be attended to there, or the mother would be immediately called upon if her daughter is in her husband's house.

Thirty years ago the village had no official midwife (dayah), but since then a certificated woman has been responsible for deliveries. It is the members of the same family, however, who have been performing the functions of midwifery. The profession of a midwife is not a coveted one, as the midwife must be a woman 'who cannot be shamed'.[1] Like very old women, the midwife is a 'mukabila' who can meet men face to face, talk to any man and walk in the streets without hiding her face. This might be also explained by the fact that the midwife is a woman engaged in an 'unclean' task, for a woman who is giving birth is considered to be 'unclean'. Yet in some cases the midwife is not called upon for birth, especially if a qualified woman exists in the family.

For delivery, the pregnant woman is seated on three stones, a proverbial position for anxiety and pain as expressed in the common saying 'Like a woman sitting on the stones'. The mother usually supports the back, while two other women each hold a leg and another two hold the outstretched arms. The usual birth-pangs are accompanied by requests of help from saints, especially 'Assayid al Badawi' who is the recognized saint to be called upon to 'widen the straits'. The after-birth is thrown out at night 'to be eaten by the dogs', the purpose fathering a wish that the woman would bear as many children as the bitch bears puppies—(dogs being known for their proliferousness).[2]

The child's first cry is interpreted as his reaction to his coming from 'the wide to the narrow'.[3] He is immediately swaddled in old washed clothes belonging to the father or mother. The mother's jewellery, which had been taken off before delivery, is now put beside the child, as a gesture that the mother is no longer a mere bride (in the case of the first child), but a mother whose child is more valuable to her than her jewels. In the case of a boy, other objects are put alongside, such as scissors and a sheathed

[1] It is perhaps because of her duty, the sex taboo is not enjoined upon her.

[2] For the belief in the importance of the placenta as a survival of the ancient Egyptian belief, see Seligman, 'Ancient Egyptian Beliefs in Modern Egypt', in *Essays and Studies presented to William Ridgeway*, Cambridge University Press, 1913, pp. 451–2.

[3] The women villagers' explanation seems to be in line with what some psychoanalysts call the 'birth-trauma'.

1: Ammar E, I-5 (1951) 1954
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Silwa

ADOLESCENCE, SEX AND MARRIAGE

Summing up the first dominant norm during the adolescent stage, one finds that boys and girls accept responsibility for active work and are characterized by the elimination of play elements compared with childhood and submission to parental authority as an ennobling virtue.

By the age of sixteen or seventeen the adolescent boys toe the line of adults, who reluctantly allow children to play their games or tell stories, provided they are assured of their victory in due course. The age-group of adolescents is interested in real issues and happenings of the village, e.g. disputes, ceremonies, neighbours' gossip, the new camel or bull that so-and-so bought, things that their families sell or buy in the market, the times of sowing and harvesting. Even in their interest in stories, it is the Jiha type of story with its realistic touch, and those of life or miraculous feats of saints rather than the fables that interest them.

The attitudes towards sex represent the second norm that becomes dominant in the individual's life at this stage. It is true that sex segregation of children in play, the boys' abandoning of their earrings (while girls keep them), starts earlier, at the age of nine and ten years, but it is almost fully established by the age of twelve and thirteen.[1]

Sex organs now become pudenda and adolescents become careful about the way they sit or what they wear. The notion of shame (Ar) is primarily a word connoting sex disgrace or sexual infidelity. This is the first association that arises in the villager's mind, and has been extended to comprise 'every forbidden impropriety, from a trifling breach of etiquette to the most serious moral turpitude'.[2] The first real emotional feeling of what it means to bring 'ar' to one's family comes through the excessive shame connected with sex organs. Adolescent boys urinate out of sight, while the girls make use of a private room inside the house. Boys wear long pants, whereas girls wear a headcloth to cover part of their face and their breasts on passing by men.[3] For both, any conversation about sex is taboo, and they are forbidden to talk about it to their parents or to any grown-up. Chastity as a moral and religious ideal implies the avoidance of any stimulating pleasurable influence from the opposite sex, or talking about sex. Adolescent girls are not encouraged to look attractive for fear of tempting

Japanese rely on maximizing the restraints upon him. *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword*, p. 254. This generalization applies, on the whole, to the methods of socialization in Silwa.

[1] I noticed that some boys and girls in their free drawings used to draw a line between men and women in a wedding ceremony or a pilgrims' procession. In the Rorschach testing the contrast between the two sexes was expressed in phrases such as 'These are women wearing black and these are men wearing white' although there was nothing in the blot to match statements like this.

[2] W. Robertson Smith, *Lectures and Essays*, London, 1912, p. 156. This word 'ar is different from 'L'ar' or 'al'ard' as pronounced in Silwa which means 'protection' and is said to invoke the help of another person. See E. Westermarck, 'L'ar or the Transference of Conditional Curses in Morocco', in *Anthropological Essays presented to E. B. Tylor*, Oxford, 1907.

[3] I was told that neither women nor adolescent girls wear any special clothes for menstruation.

[For examples, See Category 185 116, pp. 179-183--Qna/YST]

1: Ammar E, 1-5 (1951) 1954
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Silwa

men. One woman told me that a girl who beautifies herself will find difficulty in marriage and will have no 'lamah' (halo) about her to please her husband when married.

During adolescence, however, the girl would be prepared for marriage by tattooing her lower lip and by a special mode of hair style, distinguishable from the loose hanging hair of childhood. For tattooing the lip, a special woman is invited to prick the lip with a pack of needles smeared in black soot mixed with animal bile. The hair dressing of an adolescent girl and a woman is very much like that among the Sudanese women.[1] A special woman called 'mashata' plaits the hair into small tresses tightly covering the head. This style of hair makes a firm basis for fixing her ornaments on marriage, which are usually composed of three golden disks (dinar, pl. dananeer) that dangle over the forehead, and a silver chain connected to the ends of the hair at the back.

It is during adolescence also that boys show the greatest interest in singing, and for this purpose they form the so-called 'circle of romance boys' (awlad al hawa). In these circles, held usually in summer, on festive occasions, weddings and circumcision, youths give vent to their new interest in love. They perform by standing in a circle with one taking the lead by singing a song while the other boys listen. On finishing, they repeat in chorus the last line again and again, clapping their hands rhythmically till the first singer or another youth starts another song. Some of these songs are composed extemporaneously, while others are old ones repeated. The following three examples are typical of the songs sung:

Ya bit ya um ghawaish,
khallaiti 'agli taish,
nassaitini al ma'aish,
Chorus: Wi dmoui 'al'ashik 'al khaddain.

O thou girl with bracelets,
thou hast rendered my mind crazy,
and hast made me neglect my work.
Chorus: And the tears of the lover are on the cheeks.

. . . . .

Rakbah min foag wasil,
tihki bil hasil,
mafeesh adab wasil.
Chorus: 'Ala annabi wahhid wi salli.

She is on the top (on the roof),
telling what has happened,
she has no politeness at all.
Chorus: Say God is one and pray for the Prophet.

[1] Cf. Sophie Zenovsky, 'Marriage Customs in Omdurman', in *Sudan Notes and Records*, Vol. XXVI, Part ii, 1945, p. 244.

1: Ammar E, 1-5 (1951) 1954
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Silwa

functions and the impact of this standardization on the basic personality structure and social institutions.[1] In the light of this statement, the social disciplines connected with sexuality are relevant data, and according to Kardiner, of great significance in understanding the basic personality structure and in explaining partly the nature of primary institutions.

It seems that in Silwa the process of socialization is similar in many points to that amongst the Tallensi and the Samoans, with regard to the continuity of the inculcated social norms and the spheres of adult and child activities.[2] Unlike many Western societies, youth in Silwa do not express in their attitudes that sense of being torn between youthful autonomy and parental insistence on dependence. This problem does not seem to be disturbing to parents and would seem abhorrent to youth who like to demonstrate their allegiance to their family and clan. Even if such desire for autonomy is occasionally expressed by boys, who on disagreement with their parents desert them for some relatives in another village or go to town to work, this is considered to be the exception, and of course such a desertion can never be entertained by girls. The lack of such strong desire could be explained by the security the youth derives from his status in his family and his need to be married by his parents.

Psychologically, however, adolescent boys, and more so adolescent girls, impressed the writer as being on the whole timid, apprehensive and withdrawn. These traits stand out more clearly if compared with children's groups. Attitudes of initiative, self-assertion and drive seem to be the exception in adolescent behaviour.[3] In attempting to account for such general characteristics, the writer does not claim them to be the negative phase of the adolescent stage. He attributes their striking appearance to the cumulative effect of the severe social disciplines, and especially those connected with sex. The maturing of sex functions at this stage is noted with great embarrassment, shame and feeling of guilt by adolescents. As mentioned before, complete hush and excessive secrecy prevails over sexual matters among adolescents as well as adults. This seems to contrast sharply with free bodily gratification given to the infants. There is no word for masturbation in the villagers' dialect. Sexual pleasure of any kind outside the marriage tie is condemned by the text of the Koran, as mentioned earlier.

Manifestations of this excessive repression and fear of sex are obvious in the veiling of adolescent girls and women and the hiding of the breast

[1] Richard T. Sollinberger, 'The Concept of Adolescence', in *The Psychological Bulletin*, Vol. 36, 1939, pp. 600–1. A. Kardiner, *The Individual and His Society*.

[2] For adolescence and puberty as treated in different societies, see also Ruth Benedict, *Patterns of Culture*, Chapter II.

[3] This is the writer's general impression and could only be substantiated by comprehensive recording of the behaviour of adolescents. According to Fortes, however, 'for most problems of social anthropology, variations are of minor importance as compared with the "typical". For problems of developmental psychology variations may be of the utmost importance.' *Patterns of Culture*, p. 8.

1: Ammar E, I-5 (1951) 1954
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Silwa

contours with extra pieces of cloth, in the downcast look of boys when speaking to an adult, a well-known characteristic of this stage of development. The writer also noticed on many occasions adolescent boys who were either enraged or ashamed on seeing their mother sitting with relatives outside the house at night, others who threw dust at their adolescent sisters and even married sisters when looking outside the house without proper covering, even when no man was passing by. When sisters become 'a shame' in the matter of going out fetching water or running errands, adolescent boys do not object to taking over some of these duties.[1] The writer also noticed an adolescent boy who, rebuked by his mother on the grounds of his 'mature age' and 'the smell of his pubic hair', flared up with rage and wept. This may be an extreme case, but it is indicative of the excessive shame and apprehension connected with sex. Obviously girls have not much scope for venting the pressures of sexual repressions, and they become more sullen and apprehensive than the boys, but not for long, as they are soon to get married. This excessively repressive and restrictive discipline over sex marks out the process of growing up in this community under study from Taleland and Samoa, where the attitude towards sex is much more permissive.

At this juncture it is appropriate to apply Kardiner's constructs concerning the effect on the basic personality structure of the way a culture satisfies the individual's dependency cravings, which are biologically determined. It seems that this excessive prohibition on sexuality at the stage of adolescence is a social discipline imposed to create and perpetuate the attitude of timidity and dependence of the growing individuals on their seniors. To obey such a discipline is a method of ingratiation, and of establishing conditions for being loved, protected and socially accepted. Thus it works as a lever which parental authority manipulates to make children acquiescent and dependent and as a social technique for minimizing initiative and ambition.[2] These exaggerated cravings of dependency and their concomitant consequences of the inflation of the parental image and social conformity probably explain the psychological undercurrents lying behind the great indifference to social change in this village as well as in many other similar communities in Egypt.

To what extent do inordinate sibling rivalry and excessive shame and

[1] See Appendix VIII, where one of the adolescent boys evinces his shame at his sister's growing breast.

[2] This is based on Kardiner's explanation that restrictive sex discipline creates instead of a friendly attitude to the impulse, one of anxiety which is in 'anticipation of danger'. 'Instead of the self-confidence and the idea "I can get pleasure by and from myself", there appears an exaggerated idea of the cruelty of the forbidding parent. Instead of the attitude of self-confidence, the opposite develops—a lack of it, together with an inordinate increase in dependency and timidity.' He further maintains that interference with sexual development creates exaggerated dependency, the inflation of the parental image, an overvaluation of the boons of dependency, and the encouragement of secondary outlets for the repressed hostility to the interfering disciplinarian. *The Individual and His Society*, p. 28.

THE FELLĀḤĪN OF UPPER EGYPT

I fancy that there was really no just cause for the woman's jealous suspicions. However, she has reduced her husband to a state of abject fear lest he may arouse her anger—though I did hear that on one occasion he had plucked up sufficient courage to exercise his 'rights' as a husband, and so had administered a whipping for some fault she had committed!

With regard to the division of labour among the sexes, the men certainly have the hardest and largest share, the most strenuous work in the fields being invariably done by them. The women and girls join their menfolk in the cultivation after the sun has risen, but their work is usually confined to the gathering of dry roots, tending the cattle, fetching the water for the household (Fig. 16), and so on. Of course, living is simple among the peasants, so that very strenuous work for the women is not necessary. Much, however, that might be done by them is neglected simply because they are without training in domestic duties and do not realize what important work lies to their hands.

It is, of course, very difficult for the peasants to be as clean as they should be. All the water has to be fetched by the women, often from some distance. No water is laid on in the villages, no bathrooms exist, and the houses lack the most ordinary domestic offices. Excuses must, therefore, be made for the Egyptian women, who have had none of the advantages of the poorest woman in England. The instinct of the Egyptian *fellāḥīn*, however, is to be clean, and the religion of Islām commands ablutions. A man will almost instinctively strip and bathe if he happens to be near a canal or the river, but this privilege is denied to the women, as modesty forbids their bathing in public.

One of the most crying needs in Egypt is that both girls and women should have instruction in the care and upbringing of children. The children undergo a great deal of unnecessary suffering during the early years of their infancy; not because their mothers are lacking in affection, for Egyptian women are, as a rule, devoted mothers, but because they are so hopelessly ignorant.

The results of such ignorance more often than not leave an indelible mark on the child, such as defective eyesight or even absolute blindness. To prevent or cure disease in their children the women will go to one magician after another and purchase from them amulets and written charms, not grudging for a moment the expenditure of what may be to them considerable sums of money.

[Text continues on page 42]

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

71.

Worldly Wise Advice.

539x
581
834

Yabu-l-bint el-baliġ biḥḥa,
ʾablē ṣalāḥ el-bint mēdīʿ.
Yabūha, mā-tʾulšē ʿalēha: di ḥurra;
lamma-tšūf eg-gidʿān barra,
tiʿmil zē el-mohra lamma-tšīʿ.

O father of the marriageable daughter, sell her
Before the maiden's virtue is lost.
O thou, her father, say not of her: "She is an honorable girl".
When she sees the fellows outside,
She acts like an inflamed young mare.

1. "Sell", that is to say: "marry her off"; compare No. 57.
3. Thou canst not call her an honorable girl.

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

80.

Caution.

Ya munyati, gūdi
u-kīdi-l-'azāl,
wirḫi ḍalal ša'rik
yeṛaṭṭi-n-nehūd,
widdīni bōse u-gūd!
'al-li: ana ḫāif
tiṯma' te'addi-l-ḥodūd!

O thou my desire, be generous
And outwit the watcher!
Loosen the veil of thy hair,
That it may cover thy breasts,
And give me a kiss and be generous!
Then she said to me: I fear,
Thou desirest to overstep the bounds!

2. The watcher, who prevents lovers from meeting, plays a large part in oriental love-songs. This is explained by the strict watch which is kept over the women and girls. In the country this vigilance is not as strict toward women who are not especially attractive, as it is in the city. The further one goes from Cairo, the less one sees of veiled women.

9: Klunzinger D-5 (1863-1875) 1878
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

562 [512] again repairs to the sacred apartments of those denied to all but himself.

In the feeling of the Moslim the harems are not citadels of jealousy, in which the husband keeps penned up a considerable flock of luxurious indolent beauties. This representation, so current in the land of the Franks, is spurned by the Oriental with indignation. The women's apartments are [834] rather places sacred and inviolable, where the *harim* (singular *harme; hárem* is meaningless), that is "the prohibited," the women, the *family*, and therefore the husband's dearest treasure must be guarded from profane glances and frivolous influences. As above remarked, they are by no means im- [554] prisoned, with the exception perhaps of the women of the highest ranks, they are merely kept and brought up, so that [834] they may shut themselves off by their veils both in the home and outside from all strange men; among themselves they enjoy the freest intercourse. Such a harem existed already [191] among the ancient Greeks under the less hostilely regarded name of *gynaikeion*, and even yet the Greek women are not completely emancipated, and are very strictly looked after. Besides, the native Christian women, at least in Upper Egypt, are even more than those of the Moslim "prohibited." Among the ancient Egyptians, however, they were very free, and went unveiled. In consequence of being thus shut up [184] the oriental women have almost come to form a separate caste, whose laws the men have to respect. This caste has its [554] female sheikhs, for which dignity the midwives and bathing women in particular are selected, has its medical art, its songs and music, its fashions, almost its own language indeed, [195] at least so far as expressions are concerned, and unlimited rule over the little children belonging to it. From the round of its meetings even the master of the house is inexorably excluded. Of course, according to the law, the woman is the [834] servant of the man; she has not the right to sit at a common [264] table with her husband; on the street he shyly avoids his [183] veiled spouse; she is even treated by religion as an object of pollution, contact with which demands a full bath before the believer can again perform his devotions; and when men-

9: Klunzinger D-5 (1863-1875) 1878
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

tion is made of her it is usually accompanied, as in the case of other unclean things, with a "saving your presence" (*esauk Allah*, literally "God honour you"); with regard to inheritance she is regarded as only a half person; she is generally excluded from the mosque, and as a rule is not required to pray, or to know more than is necessary for housekeeping. Still, in the lands of Islam, as well as in the rest of the world, the weaker sex has subjected the stronger in certain fields. Here, too, there are plenty of men who are under petticoat government. The wife is significantly called *sitt*, that is, "mistress," and even the husband calls her so. The wife has even duties to perform towards the outer world in so far as she has to manage the housekeeping. When, in the absence of her husband a guest has to be entertained, meals are served up in the name of the wife through her servants or children, she inquires after the name and health of the guest, but she herself does not appear.

Her sphere of activity is entirely limited to the house, and she fulfils her mission with all the more contentment that the pleasures of the great world are unknown to her. She is not unsusceptible to the attractions of dress and finery—her sex makes this a matter of course—but she has only her husband and her female friends to shine before, and that sets a natural limit to her desires. Her longings do not go beyond her state of half freedom, to which she is accustomed from her youth up, seclusion is not regarded by her as a restraint imposed by the tyrannical men, but as a precept of morality, and a sudden edict of emancipation would at once arouse in the harem itself as much indignation and resistance as a tightening of the reins among the ladies of civilization. It is not to be denied that only in the garden of freedom can a healthy plant thrive, and come to maturity and produce fruit a thousand fold. The greenhouse plant never feels the storm, but it remains weakly and droops at the slightest breath of unaccustomed air that gains entrance from the outside by some crevice. Yet experience teaches that a goodly number of those open-air garden plants cannot stand their freedom, and perish if they do not receive strict attention and care.

9: Klunzinger D-5 (1863-1875) 1878
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

abode. The corpse-washer goes to work with the utmost care; he washes the body up and down, repeatedly cleaning out all external openings, including the nose and ears, and stops them with cotton; cotton is placed even between the toes and fingers and under the armpits. After the body is dried with equal care it is enveloped in the linen cloth, which has meantime been sewed together, and in such a way that no part of the dead is now visible. It is then laid on a bier without a coffin (it is only the Christians that hastily put a coffin together), and a green or red pall is spread over it. After a benediction has been said over it in the mosque, it is carried to the graveyard.

Hither the dead are borne at a rapid pace, those at least that were Mohammedans. With a haste and hurry that nothing can check the funeral procession rolls along, amid the murmur of *la ilah ill allah*, in order to carry the bier from the city of the living to the city of the dead. The advanced guard is formed by some blind and poor people and petty scribes, perhaps also some boys as a kind of choristers, and some flag-bearers. The bier is borne by four men, friends of the deceased, who are relieved by others of his friends, and thus the rapid march does not meet with the slightest interruption. A long procession of mourners and sympathizers follows, all in their ordinary working-day blouses, the relatives in the oldest and filthiest possible. Several portly well-to-do gentlemen pant behind, or have got themselves mounted upon trotting asses. By the side or at the end of the procession follows the wailing chorus of women, who on this day show remarkably little of their usual strictness in veiling themselves.

Having reached its destination, the corpse, wrapped only in its white shroud, is taken from the bier and let down without a coffin into a perpendicular excavation. During this proceeding, if the corpse is that of a female her former street mantle is held spread out over her in order to keep off longing glances—under such circumstances little to be expected. It is not the perpendicular excavation, however, that receives the dead body, which, being protected by no